

Senate Resolution 426

By: Senators Cowser of the 46th, Hudgens of the 47th, Goggans of the 7th and Powell of the 23rd

A RESOLUTION

1 Commending Darius O'Brien Weems and recognizing Thursday, March 5, 2009, as
2 Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy Day at the state capitol; and for other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy (DMD) affects one in 3,500 boys with an
4 estimated 20,000 sufferers in the United States and 60,000 world wide; and

5 WHEREAS, the life expectancy for those children struggling with DMD is their late teens
6 to early twenties; and

7 WHEREAS, DMD knows no racial or geographic boundaries and is the most common fatal
8 genetic childhood disease; and

9 WHEREAS, Darius O'Brien Weems, a young man afflicted by DMD, was inspired by the
10 loss of his 19 year old brother, Mario, to the same disease, and decided to raise awareness
11 of DMD and its effects on countless lives around the world; and

12 WHEREAS, in 2005, Darius Weems and his 11 man crew created *Darius Goes West: The*
13 *Roll of His Life*, a documentary following Darius from his hometown of Athens, Georgia,
14 across the country to Los Angeles, California, for an appearance on the MTV series *Pimp My*
15 *Ride*, to customize his wheelchair; and

16 WHEREAS, the movie documents the 7,000 mile journey in which Darius and his friends
17 prove that life has no limits and celebrate the amazement and wonder of friendship and being
18 alive; and

19 WHEREAS, the hilarious and heartfelt film was funded through grants from United Cerebral
20 Palsy, Children's Wish Foundation International, Emmanuel Episcopal Church, and the
21 Turner Foundation, and by the generous and kind-hearted citizens of Athens, Georgia, who
22 donated money and helped raise funds for the cross-country trip; and

23 WHEREAS, Darius' film, which has raised over \$1.5 million in theaters alone, is a non-profit
24 production with 100 percent of the proceeds going to DMD research; and

25 WHEREAS, one of the most decorated movies of 2007, *Darius Goes West* has captured 28
26 film festival awards and dramatically increased awareness of DMD and the desperate need
27 for research and funding to find a cure.

28 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE that the members of this body
29 commend Darius O'Brien Weems and his crew in their remarkable film, applaud them for
30 their outstanding contributions in furthering the country's awareness of Duchenne Muscular
31 Dystrophy, and recognize Thursday, March 5, 2009, as Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy Day
32 at the state capitol.

33 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate is authorized and directed
34 to transmit an appropriate copy of this resolution to Darius O'Brien Weems.